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THE JACG NEWSLETTER

THE JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP

VOLUME 9 NUMBER 10 BBS : 201-298-0161 DECEMBER 1989

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I'd like to have a few words with those members who do not attend the monthly meetings. I know there are plenty of very good reasons people cannot always attend. I've had a few in the past myself. However, if the reason is that you think nothing happens or can still be learned there, you're wrong.

Look at what you missed this month (December '89) for example. We had (are having, as I write this) some great demos this month. We had the new game for the ST, BattleHawks 1942 demoed by Jeff Stevens. We had an ST/Midi Music demo by Joe Wyks and Ed Matthews. We had Eric Jacovies give us a Guide to the Solar System. I did a beginner's guide to most of the programming languages available on the 8-bit and ST. And finally Joe Hicswa did a demo on 8-bit RAMdisks. Now don't tell me you don't see at least one thing there that is worth a trip to the meeting!

For those of you who have vaild reasons for not attending, I need your help. For you folks, this newsletter is your major point of contact. As such, I want to try and gear its content to a majority of members.

I passed out a survey at the last meeting and if you could take a few moments to answer the same questions and mail your answers to my address on the back cover, I would greatly appreciate it. Please be forewarned

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

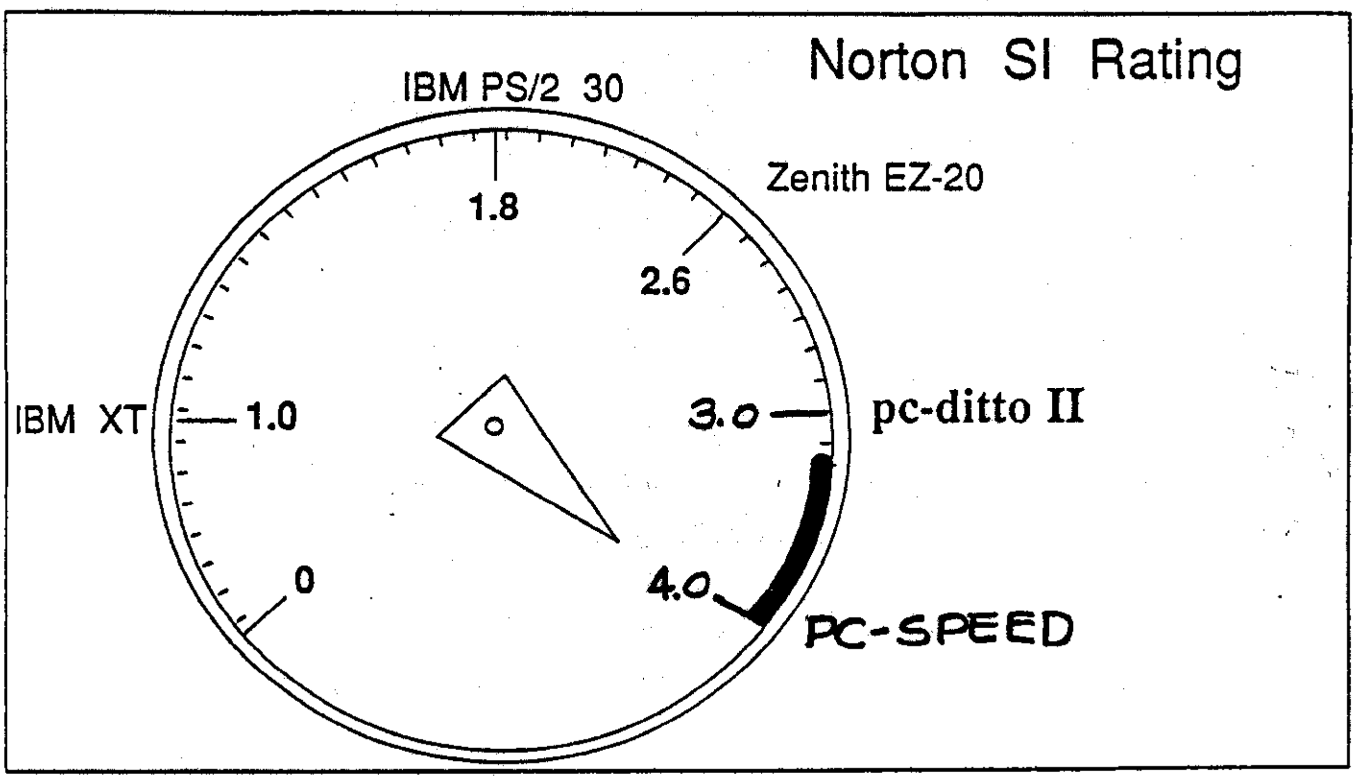
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NOISE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This is my first attempt at combining "Noise from Noyes" and the "President's Report", so please bear with me...hopefully, it won't be unbearable!.

For those of you who are 8-bitters...I saw a fairly recent "two-for" at Sears (in the Commodore section). The titles were: "L.A. Swat" and "Panther", by Mastertronic...for $14.99. Other than cartridges for the XE Game Machine, it's about the only new? title I've seen. It's a shame to say, but 8-bit development is at the end of its' tether, not completely gone...but close. If there are any opposing views...please write!

16-bit releases, on the other hand, are, thankfully!, still too numerous to mention, although I see the same pattern (vis a vis IBM, Commodore Amiga) that plagued the 8-bit Atari; that is, a reluctance on the part of developers to release Atari versions. The choice of titles (on an abundance basis) greatly favors the "other" machines. Sic Semper Atariensis!

Now the JACG has, of course, excellent 8 and 16-bit disk libraries, with literally hundreds of disks "chock" full of GOOD and EXCELLENT PD, Shareware and Freeware titles; don't be bashful...dig deep into your pockets and shell out some coin to increase your computers' power and purpose.

For those of you with Atari hard disk drives for the ST and Megas...I have a request. Atari (in June, 1989) released version 3.01 of its' "Hard Disk Utilities", and strongly reccommended that it be used in place of version 3.00, which had a "bug" in it. Among the changes was a more effective "Markbad" option. If you have had ANY experience with either formatting (which automatically Markbads) or with the Markbad option by itself, please convey to me the results of the Markbad.

We recently acquired a new member through Gemini's sale of our newsletter. As the number of retail locations for Atari products is limited...there is NO better place for folks to become aware of our existence. I recently met two Atarians at Software Station in the Rockaway Mall, who never realized that our group existed...and by their questions it was readily obvious that they needed a user group. This is not a unique experience...each time that I go Atari shopping (or Atari window shopping), which is probably very to extremely often, I invariably meet unaffiliated Atarians who could both benefit from and contribute to a user group. Talk it up!

Thanks to all those officers in for 1990. I know first-hand the sacrifices one makes to help an organization like the JACG remain viable. A special thanks to Gary Gorski for his "helmsmanship" during the past year.

By the way, don't blame our editor, Dave Arlington, for the lack of our usual paginated and distinctive Newsletter pages...your new president (yep, me) wiped out the boot sector on his hard disk, and learned that Michtron's image backup has some caveats (not in the original documentation...but there now, so they say) which prevented recovery, the net result being that I lost the Pagestream files for the blank pages...so sorry!.

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that though I will read every letter carefully, it may take some time to implement your suggestion. I have to find people to write the articles, after all.

So here are the questions. Tell me whether you own and 8-bit or ST or both. What *type* of articles would you like to see more of in the newsletter? (Use generalized comments here.) What *specific* subject would you like to see an article on? And finally, since I would like to publish more programs in the newsletter, I would like your ideas for programs we could publish. (The more specific here, the better.)

That's it. Write 'em down and dash it off to me. Please remember that the more input I get from everybody, the better product I'll be able to give you each month. Thanks for your time!

ALL ABOUT CARINA II BBS
By Mike Arendasky

I'd like to start off by saying that this is my first article for the JACG. To my knowledge, there has never been a review written on this subject in the monthly newsletter.

The Carina II BBS is a very powerful system in that it gives the users and Sysop(s) great flexibility. The users have a BBS that understands English. Try this one on any Carina II BBS (now referred as C-II), Type "I Need some serious Help" this will get you to the help database, and thus get you serious help. In this example, the only word recognized by the system is "HELP". You could also type in, "I'd like to read all the new messages, then download a file or two" and this will indeed show you all the new messages and prompt you for which file you wanted to download. It recognized the words "READ", "ALL", "NEW", and "DOWNLOAD". As you can see, even the dimmest of us can use it. The most common way to use it though, is control key macros. Here are a few examples - Ctrl-R would type "Read " on your screen, and Ctrl-D would type "Directory ". As you can see, C-II is really powerful.

C-II is divided up into what we would call Special Intrest Groups, or SIGs for short. Up to 26 SIGs can be created, and each can have its own message base, file area, database, vote-poll, and game area.

Now, as a Sysop of the BBS, as opposed to Sigop, which I will go into more detail about later, I have many functions. I can Create/Edit the Sigs, Mask out or in a command or section for all or selected users, exit to SpartaDos, or even Basic while online, even remotely. Notice I said SpartaDos, this is the ONLY dos that will work with C-II, and only 3.2d and higher (including the X-Cart) are supported. The nicest Sysop feature though, is the multi-tasking window that lets you edit a users stats while he/she is online, without them knowing about it! The following commands are both Sysop and Sigop commands - Make-Vote, this lets you make up to 26 vote questions in the SIG (Sysops can do it in all SIGs, Sigops, just in their own SIG) and up to 26 answers for each question. You can edit the SIGs bulletin file (Sysops, any file). And edit a users stats just for that SIG. Powerful enough yet?

C-II is written in Atari BASIC and will work with Basic-XL and Basic-XE when used with SpartaDos 3.2d, you can only use the built-in BASIC with the X-Cart. This makes the BBS highly modifiable. Sysops can create many games, and if a user logs in in ATASCII mode, these games can have graphics, the Control key characters. On my BBS, I have a seperate Carina section, and hopefully, will have a hard drive by this meeting. If you log on and want access to this sig, just ask.

So, as you can see, it is more powerful by the minute. Now, I will get into the "REAL" games possible on Carina II. RoboWar II came with Carina II (for an extra $15.00) and is a game consisting of five modules. What this means is that the game loads in other portions of the game as it deems necessary. This way, the games can be huge sizes. RoboWar II takes up 100K! In this game, you build a robot, gamble with your money, and hopefully fight and destroy other robots. You can battle a computer robot, or a user's robot, which the computer controls. It is a huge game, and is best seen if you log onto my BBS.

The World of Zenobia, made by Katt-Ware, is another major game for C-II (300K!) In this game, you control your alter-ego through town, forests, and dungeons. You also must joust others to keep your honor and challenge other citizens to an Arena Fight. The object of the game is to rescue the princess and return her back to the town (a familiar plot). This game, however, is not really played, but

experienced.

The Jousts, for example, get personal. eg. "Ye Olde Explorer growls at thee", or, "Dave A! spits at thee". These messages get very personal. When you enter the dungeon it is possible to get so fustrated that unless you have good experience, that there is an option "Kill thyself"! This game is far superior to RoboWar II, and should attract many users.

I hope this helped out a lot of people, and would greatly appreciate it if you called my system. I will announce the number at the meeting. (ED. NOTE: Mike announced the number at the last JACG meeting. If you would like to call his BBS, the number is (201) 948-6957.) If you would like to give the games a try, log on at 300/1200 baud, and when it asks for "Enter Name or Account #", enter "3", then, when you get to "Enter password", type "JACG". This will give you limited access - very limited, you can only read the messages and play the games. If you would like to have a permanant password on the system, log on and type your real name and follow the prompts. Leave Feedback and state you are a JACG member and I will give you 90 minutes per day, and access to more SIGs.

Coming soon, articles on how to modify Carina II and more. Hope to see you on the New World II BBS.

Sysop: Ye Olde Hacker (Mike Arendasky).

JACG BBS ANNOUNCES NEW 8-BIT SIGOP

Well, it finally happened. I caught a virus. Yep. I was really getting into modemming, and sure enough, I got a bug. Not a software bug mind you, but a mental one. You see, I've become an online junkie. And I am I ever paying the price for it. Before I knew what happened Gary Gorski had me convinced that I was destined to become the JACG/BBS's 8 bit sysop.

So there it is. I'm the new 8 bit sigop. On a trial basis, that is. I have never sysoped anything before. In fact, I've only owned a modem for less than a year. So I hope you'll all be patient with me. I'll give it my best shot. Any and all suggestions, questions and advice is not just welcome but sorely needed!

Glad to be aboard!
Sincerely,
Lars F. Fuchs

FOOD FIGHT
reviewed by Neil Van Oost Jr., JACG

Food Fight is an Atari XE Video Game Cartridge (c)1987, which plays on all XL/XE computers. The introduction in the game manual starts out: Once there was a fellow named Charley. More than anything, Charley loved to eat....

This arcade game has a rather simple theme. Charley must race across the floor and gobble an ice cream cone before it melts. To do this he has 32 seconds, three to fifteen lives, and must battle two to four chefs. The chef's names are Angelo, Zorba, Oscar, and Jacques.

In order to do battle with the chefs, Charley must run over piles of food, which he can throw at the chefs. Scoring is rather simple, with points earned for clobbering chefs, eating the cone, and for the amount of leftovers left. If Charlie plays like a champ, you get to see an instant replay of his last round.

This game had a negative impact on me. First of all I didn't think the graphics were that great and the theme was overly simple. Also I really didn't find the idea of a food fight very appealing. When I was a kid, food was for eating and even though this is "only a game" I cannot help but think that it might have some influence on younger minds with whom it is so popular. Overall I would have to rate this a so-so game with a short attention span.

FROM HERE TO THERE
by Neil Van Oost Jr., JACG

In my last article I covered conversion programs. This time around I want to present some ideas on how to use your pictures and some different print programs. When you are a dedicated "Picture Junkie" like I am, you soon find yourself with a couple of dozen disks of picture files. These fall into several different catagories. Perhaps the largest group will be Print Shop icons.

There are so many Print Shop Icons available in the public domain and from No Frills Software that one could just specialize in collecting these. Basically I have seen three different types of PS icons; low density, high density, and multi color. A deeper view into these I will reserve for a future time. In fact since there is so much to say about Print Shop I will not go any further now, but will think on the subject some more.

My first picture printer was a Centronics 739 printer with a grey scale dump program from the old Atari Program Exchange. This was a great program at the time('83) and I went merrily along squeezing ink out of ribbons, with some pretty black and white pictures as by-products. Mostly back then I printed pictures with no goal in mind. I stuck them on my locker and toolbox at work, all over my bedroom and gave lots away.

My next aquisition for picture printing was an Atari 1020 Printer/Plotter. Owning and playing with one of these little jewels is a picture junkies dream come true. It is without a doubt one of the best little four color small picture printers around. And the really great news is they are still being advertised for sale at great prices. 3 for $25.00 or $10 to $20 each depending on which ad you read and how many the dealer has in stock.

After I had printed up several of these small 4 by 5 inch pictures, I thought how good they would look framed. The only thing was I really didn't want to go out an buy a frame, I wanted something special. Hand made frames, that was the only way to go. Now the only affinity with wood that I have is splinters. So a major production was something definately to be avoided. What I came up with was pure genius. The only tools needed were paper towels, a razor blade(single edged), some thin cardboard, stain of your choice, balsa wood and white "Elmer's" type glue.

It took an hour to cut out, stain, glue the picture and the frame to the cardboard on that first picture. In the next hour I was able do the other five pictures I had ready. For a finishing touch a light coat of artist's matt or gloss spray with a piece of small gold or silver thread or aluminum chain will add a nice touch. These little pictures turned out to make such an impression with my friends that I was soon doing requests. Snoopy and Linus were in biggest demand. One of these days I have to make some more, they were fun to make and I only have this one left tacked up next to my computer.

One of my favorite picture plotter programs for the 1020 is "1020 Picture Maker", a public domain program by George L. Graff, (c)1984. This program allowed you to load Touch Tablet or Graphics 8 pictures. Once loaded you are able to assign the four colors or blank for white to each of the four pens. You then are able to see the results of these color changes on the screen. You can change them around as many times as you wish, and when they are most pleasing to you, press the Start button to print.

Also another good plotter program is, "Screen Plot", by R. Wilson & M. Reichmann. It is from ANTIC magazine and (C)1984 by Irata Press Ltd. This program allows the use of the Atari 1020, Radio Shack CGP115, Tally Pixy,

or Sweet Pea 100 plotters. You can print a full page large (4x5 in) picture or smaller (aprox 2 1/2 in sq.) picture in upper or lower left or right. You have the choice of loading Touch Tablet, Atari Light Pen, Atari Paint or Atari World type pictures. The choice of over-plotting pictures is also available and selecting your pen colors. As a last choice you can fast plot a picture for a quick look at the outcome or slow plot for the finished product.

There is lots more I could say about the 1020 and plotting programs for it, but supper is on the table and afterwards I have some monsters to kill. (In the Dunzhin maze) So until the next time when I continue with picture print programs and what to do with those masterpieces, this is your favorite "Picture Junkie" signing off.

ATARI VIRUS???

Commentary by Joseph E. Hicswa, JACG

Atari world is infected by a virus.

Venomous remarks invade us about a lack of new hardware, software, namely: a want of support from Atari, software producers, and Atarians.

Are the moaners and groaners serious? Do the rancorous actually know what they want? Can they really enjoy who they are, where they are, with all that they own? Is berating Atari world a way to vent their spleens? Maybe virulents permeate Atari Family groups to disunite us and destroy us?

If the unhappys are trying to have me desert Atari, they should join a non-Atari club and send articles to other newsletters or magazines. Atari has no electronic curtain. They are free to leave.

Some years ago I became serious about entering the computer world and began reading library books and periodicals to learn computer jargon. (And still have not learned it all.) I searched for a computer. After several months of comparing products and prices, the best computer for my money was Atari. It will accomplish what others can do -- maybe not as voluminous or as speedy -- but it does it! My Atari is a work horse, not a racy horse. It gets the job done!

An 8-bit, 48K, 1200XL computer amuses me and fascinates me four, seven, twelve hours a day. I have not yest utilized it completely.

As an Atari user for several years, I haven't begun to scratch the software surface of what is presently marketed. There is so much that I am overwhelmed and satiated. Many of my programs are in original containers. They are amassed faster than I can run them. They are killing me.

I don't attend meetings or read newsletters to be disparaged and infected by negative attitudes of virus agents. I attend meetings and read newsletters for positive things -- new, better ways of enjoying and appreciating my Atari Computer.

Atari and JACG are good to me and for me -- a source of information and solving problems. They may not be perfect but no person and no thing is perfect in the universe except God. I am not perfect and I don't have a virus.

MY PERSONAL ATARI EXPERIENCE

by Dave Arlington, JACG

For those of you who did not attend the last meeting, I passed out a very informal survey which I wanted to use to determine what types of articles the members of this group were looking for. The subject of these surveys is covered elsewhere in this newsletter in greater detail. However, one thing that brought about this column was the fact that, of the few surveys that were returned, better than half of them were interested in seeing more articles on

what other people were doing with their computers and how the computers were actually being used.

So this is my story. Any others from members would be greatly appreciated. Maybe we can start a semi-regular column on how people are using their Atari computers.

To put it simply, if not for my Atari, I would not be living in New Jersey and would not be your editor. (Whether you think this is good or bad is up to you!) Way back when, when I first walked into a Radio Shack and saw a 4K TRS-80 with its black and white screen, I was hooked on computers and knew I would have one in my home someday.

By the time I finally could afford it, my desires had wandered from the TRS-80 to the Apple][to the Atari 800. I had stumbled upon an Atari during the days I was longing for an Apple, and after comparing the two. I was left wondering how Apple could remain in business. (I'm still wondering!)

After feeding my wife months of propaganda about how we were going to revolutionize our budget, we sprung for an Atari 800 with BASIC cartridge; no disk drive, not even a cassette recorder. It took about two weeks of typing in the same program from Compute! every time I wanted to run it that convinced me to buy a 410 Program Recorder. I spent a year and a half with that baby during which time I learned more about Atari's tape format than I ever want to know about any subject ever again.

During the next couple years, my Atari was mostly used as a learning tool for me to learn about computers. With its open operating system and wealth of programming languages, it was the perfect learning tool. During this time, the family that could not afford a 410 program recorder somehow accumulated a 800XL, 2 130XEs, 4 disk drives, a modem, a printer, an entire BBS system, a hard drive, and a very angry wife who was finally seeing how this was "revolutionizing" our budget!

My experiences with my Atari convinced me that working with computers was really the career for me instead of shoe sales. I decided to go back to school to get a degree in Computer Science and find a 'real' job.

Going back to school was what really put my Atari to work. I produced excellent looking papers for English classes with PaperClip. I found that while the other students were staying late in the labs programming in Turbo Pascal and Lisp on the IBMs, I was home with my family, doing the same projects in Kyan Pascal and Logo on my Atari. The other students always seemed to be upset that I only spent a few minutes in the lab transfering files to get my projects done.

When I left school and began the job search, my Atari was again a lifesaver. I used Daisy Dot II to print my resumes and when the printer had finished printing them out on an offset printer, they looked very good indeed. I used a triple combination of the mail merge feature of PaperClip, SynFile+, and Petersen's Guide to Computer and Engineering Jobs to conduct my mail campaign. SynFile+ reminded me which firms had to be sent follow-up letters.

The result of all this was my job here in New Jersey with Bell Communications Research. My long experience with Action! on the 8-bit helped me pick up the C language faster than most new employees can learn it. And that's what I do all day now, program computers. What a life! They pay me for it!

At home, the Atari is still front and center. It is a great relaxer when it comes to games and programming projects. Programming projects that resulted in over $300 of income in the last year from the late lamented ANALOG. When we go shopping at Shop-Rite, our handy computer generated

shopping list saves us much time. My wife is much happier now since my Atari actually increased my income rather than depleting it. And oh yeah, did I tell you? I think we are going to put our budget on the computer some time soon. Yeah, sure!!

NOTES AND POINTS
by Dave Arlington

I'd like to spend a few lines talking about the survey I passed out at the November meeting soliciting comments about what kind of things people would like to see in the newsletter in the future. The questions are mentioned on the front cover. Although I recieved responses from less than 5% of the membership, that's OK, I told people to take their time answering the questions. Still there were some useful things I learned from the few responses I got.

Almost everyone wanted to see more articles about how people were actually using their Ataris in everyday use and there is an article of that type in this issue with hopefully more to come.

There were requests for more tutorial articles, something I thought people did not care for. In the future, look for articles on C programming on the ST, Action!, GFA Basic, Turbo Basic, and DOS/CIO inner workings. These articles should not be too much trouble to come up with. Other articles that were requested like more hardware hacking and MIDI articles, I will have to actively seek out volunteers to write for us.

The point is, that if you take the time to give me the feedback about what you want to see, I will do my best to orient this newsletter to what people want to see. It might take longer for some ideas to hit print than others, but all will listened to and considered. But if you don't tell me what you want to see, you'll be stuck with what you get. Remember, this is *your* newsletter!

On to other things... On the 8-bit disk of the month should be version 1.1 of the PREPX utility I wrote for the new SpartaDos X cartridge. It really only affects those folks who own stock 130XEs and were not getting the full 64K RAMdisk. The problem was due to certain inadequacies of the SDX manual in regards to all the different combinations of memory usage and RAMdisks. With the help of a fellow JACG member, I was able to track the problem down and fix it.

Other programming projects that I am personally working on that you might see in the next few months include: A revision of Dave Dvorin's disk library program so that it will work with SpartaDos subdirectories and can be used by our librarian, Sam Cory, to organize that large amount of disks he has. If you saw Dave's demo of this program in the past year, you know what a fine program it is. I'm flattered he let me have a crack at it since he does not currently have the time.

I'm also working on a menu-driven Graphics 9 picture displayer that will converts Graphics 9 pictures to MicroPainter format so you can modify them with any popular 8-bit drawing program. I would say this is 90% finished. I'm just not quite happy with the conversion algorithm I'm currently using. I'm waiting until I can see some of Neil's programs that do the same thing, so I can see how someone else handles it.

The last thing in the works is my first all assembly language project. I'm writing a 24-pin version of ANALOG's G: printing program from way back when. It turns out that while, yes, 24-pin printers are mostly compatible with 9-pin graphics printing programs like G: and Print Shop, that since the 24-pin printers are only firing 1 out of every three pins, the grpahics are all washed out and hard to see. If you are an 8-bit owner with a 24-pin printer, you will want to get

this one.

Speaking of ANALOG, you'll remember that last month I mentioned the Decmber 1989 issue will be their last issue. You don't exactly have to worry that much of the ANALOG/ST-LOG staff will have to go looking for work. Most of the staff is working on the monthly 200+ page magazine, **VIDEO GAMES AND ENTERTAINMENT**.

Gee, wasn't it only five years ago in 1984 that home computers like the Atari 800XL and the Commodore 64 were putting the finishing touches on the video game craze for good? Gone or going were the Atari 2600, ColecoVision, and Mattel's Intellivision. Now here we are five years later in 1989 and it appears the video games like Nintendo, Sega, and the like are polishing off the small home computers like the Atari XE and the C-64 for good. Funny how things seem to come full circle, isn't it?

TYPHOON THOMPSON IN SEARCH OF THE SEA CHILD
Reviewed by Joseph Moore, J.A.C.G.

For sheer beauty of graphics, with a liberal dose of humor thrown in, I've got to recommend a game called "Typhoon Thompson In The Search For The Sea Child". The plot goes something like this: Our reluctant hero "volunteers" to find the only survivor of a spacecraft which crashed on a water planet. This survivor is an infant who was taken by the water sprites who inhabit the planet. Thompson gets 4 water scooters which fly, dive and skirt along the water, to get to the sprites' islands, where they come after him in a variety of spacecraft to do battle with our hero.

The sprites' various spacecraft have the power to zap his scooter, suck his scooter up, bounce him around, enclose him in a big bubble, and toss him in the water, where he has to swim back to his island to get another water scooter. T.T.'s water scooter is mouse-controlled, and takes some practice to get the hang of. Pushing the mouse in any direction moves the scooter correspondingly, holding the right button gives the scooter jet propulsion, pushing forward while holding the left makes the scooter dive, where it can be manipulated under water in the same way. Little touches throughout the game, such as when the scooter comes out of a dive, and T.T. shakes the water off of his face, help to maintain interest. So T.T. has to persue these sprites, zap their craft, collect the sprites as they fall out, and when they are all captured, return the whole gang of them to the head sprite, in exchange for an object (a mallet, a compass, etc.) which will assist T.T. in his search for the Child.

All this plot developement and shoot-em-up spacecraft stuff would be pretty much the same old fluff if it weren't for one big distinction: This game is dazzlingly beautiful to look at. The water world is a 3-D expanse of balmy tropical blue sea, with random sparkling waves and a horizon with baby blue sky which darkens as time advances within the game. We get a camera's eye view of the action as we follow T.T. through the game, with sound effects that simulate the doppler effect, advancing and receeding into the background, or seeming to whizz bye. The graphics are on par with high quality animation, with smooth, fluid action. The overall look of the game is more of a minimovie than an "Asteroids" type, with a fanfare and credits rolling at the intro, and a very humorous opening sequence, which has at least three different versions, which can be replayed, or skipped.

This game was written by Dan Gorlin, the author of the classic game "Choplifter", another "hostage" type game where the objective is to save a life. There is no real violence in either game, no one is "killed" per se, in Sea Child, the sea sprites are blasted out of their craft, but are collected by T.T. and returned to their

leader in exchange for an object used to rescue the Child. The game is published by Broderbund Software, 17 Paul Drive, San Rafael, CA. 94903

PLANETARIUM FIX
intro by Neil Van Oost Jr., JACG

The following program appeared on both Genie and Compuserve and several BBS's around town. This is really a must have for those owners of 1050 drives who also own Atari Planetarium. What it will do for you is; modify your original Planetarium disk and enable it to boot on a Doubler equipped drive. I have tried this program and it works.

```
10 REM PLANETARIUM FIX - US DOUBLER
11 REM 4/30/87 GRASP - RICHMOND, VA
12 PRINT :PRINT "NOTE THAT THIS PROGRAM
WILL MAKE A"
13 PRINT "PERMANENT CHANGE TO YOUR
PLANETARIUM"
14 PRINT "DISK !"
15 PRINT :PRINT "NOTCH SIDE ONE OF THE
PLANETARIUM"
16 PRINT "DISK AND INSERT INTO 1050
DRIVE 1"
17 POKE 769,1:POKE 770,82:POKE 773,6
18 POKE 772,128:POKE 778,7:POKE 779,0
19 POKE 1531,104:POKE 1532,32:POKE
1533,83:POKE 1534,228:POKE 1535,96
22 GOSUB 37
24 POKE 770,87:A=PEEK(1697):B=PEEK(1702
)
25 IF A=32 AND B=96 THEN 29
26 IF B=32 AND A=96 THEN 33
27 PRINT :PRINT "NOT PROPER PLANETARIUM
DISK !"
28 END
29 PRINT :PRINT "CREATING FIX"
30 GOSUB 37
31 PRINT :PRINT "DONE !"
32 END
33 PRINT :PRINT "RESTORING TO ORIGINAL"
34 GOSUB 37
35 PRINT :PRINT "ORIGINAL RESTORED !"
36 END
37 PRINT :PRINT " PUSH START TO
CONTINUE"
38 IF PEEK(53279)<>6 THEN 38
39 POKE 1697,B:POKE 1702,A
40 X=USR(1531)
41 IF PEEK(771)=1 THEN RETURN
42 PRINT :PRINT "DISK ERROR ";PEEK(771)
```

(**EDITOR's NOTE:** Also in this issue is the Atari Planetarium Quick Reference Card that was left out of last month's newsletter.)

DECEMBER'S TOP 10 LIST
by Dave Arlington, JACG

As Atari owners, I know that sometimes it is hard to stay up late enough to cath LATE NIGHT WITH DAVID LETTERMAN. As such, perhaps you missed this Top 10 List that is near and dear to all us 8-bitter's hearts. (And please before throwing me out of the group, please remember it is only a joke!!) So without further ado:

TOP 10 REASONS TO STILL OWN AN ATARI 8-BIT COMPUTER:

10. Gives Coleco Adam owners someone to feel superior to.
9. Using it on Friday nights keeps you from watching Baywatch.
8. Time has never been better to make a killing in the 8-bit magazine market.
7. Commodore 64 is too lightweight to make really good door-stop.
6. Just t'aint fittin' to buy one of those gosh-darned new-fangled ST contraptions.
5. Don't have to worry about blowing all your Christmas money on software for yourself.
4. Nintendo is really last gasp Communist effort at world domination.
3. Ashamed kids actually look better with bags on their heads.
2. Can explain Star Wars defense system to Dan Quayle using Missle Command game.

And the number one reason to still own an Atari 8-bit computer--

1. Looks great on your desk next to the Beta VCR and 8-track tape player!

ATARI PLANETARIUM QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

COMMAND KEY TABLE

KEY	MAP	SET	SKY	CHART
(SELECT) SL(MODE) Select	Select location on Earth. Input latitude and longitude.	Select date and time of observation. Select calendar.	Display sky in any direction.	Display sky as a north-is-up astronomical star map.
(OPTION) OP(OPTNS) Select Sky Display	None	None	Cycles through available options.(SHIFT)(OPTION) turns OPTION on or off.Available:LINES,NAMES, SYMBOLS,DEEP-SKY,TRACK,SOUND.Active in	
(START) ST(FIND) Find Major SkyObjects	None	None	Cycles through objects which can be located and brought to center of screen:moon,sun,planets, Halley's Comet,constellations.Active in both SKY	
(HELP)* HP(INFRM) Ident. All VisibleSKY Objects	None	None	Identifies all displayed objects with names and catalog numbers. Displays brief data on distance, size,and object classification.Active in both SKY and CHART.	
Up/Down* Cursor Keys	Move cursor north or south on MAP.Display latitude of cursor position.	Increase/decrease number under reverse-field cursor for change of date in data window.	Move cursor up or down Display coordinates.Slew field when cursor hits edge.	Move cursor up or down Display coordinates.No slewing.
Left/ Right* Cursor Keys	Move cursor east or west on MAP.Display longitude of cursor position.	Advance cursor through month,day,year,hour,and A.M./P.M. positions in data window.	Move cursor left or right.Display coordinates . Slew field when cursor hits edge.	Move cursor left or right.Display coordinates . No slewing.
(>),(<) Keys	None	Increase/decrease number under reverse-field cursor in data window for data changes.*	Change RATE of automatic clock. 0X is stopped clock.Available:64X,32X,16X,8X,4X,2X,1X,0X, -1X,-2X,-4X,-8X,-16X,-32X,-64X,.Active in both SKY and CHART.	
(Shift) (>),(<) Keys	None	None	Change VIEWing angle. Available viewing fields: 72,36,18,9 deg. Active in both SKY and CHART.	
(N),(S), (E),(W)	None	None	Point field of view to north,south,east,west.Active in both SKY and CHART.	
(O) letter key	None	None	Points field of view exactly opposite to current direction. Active in both SKY and CHART.	
(Shift)(P) (CTL)(P)	Print current viedo display if printer is connected.Active in all modes.Use (Shift)(P) for XMM801 printer. (Control)(P) for Epson Printer.			

* Alternate joystick operation.

ZMAGAZINE'S

Z*NET

The International Atari Newsletter

December 1989 Vol. I No. 10

In This Issue

ATARI TAKES COMDEX!

Report by John Nagy

"A Computer for Everyone." This is the motto of Atari Computer at the Fall '89 COMDEX, underway through November 17 in Las Vegas, Nevada. They don't just mean that their computer is for everyone, they mean that Atari has a full line of computers that will compliment the needs and uses that any user will have. And from the miniature Portfolio (which I am using to write this even now) through the ST's to the new TT, ABC (PC compatibles), and on up to the ATW (not shown at Comdex), it looks like Atari is more poised for success than ever before.

It's Thursday night as I begin this article, and I have spent all day at the Atari Computer booth. The booth is very large and finally has the look of a major player in a serious business. The sprawling display Atari area features light, colors, and openness, the exact reverse of the effect at the April COMDEX in Chicago. Dozens of mini-booths are each dedicated to individual third party developers, some of which also had full-fledged booths elsewhere in the 9-building trade show. Nearest the rear of the booth, Atari displayed their own newest hardware in front of a smoked glass enclosed meeting room and second-floor conference area. This time, there were LOTS of conferences going on. That means DEALS with dealers and distributors. Word was that over 100 requests for new dealerships were entered by Wednesday - halfway through the show.

The mood here is optimistic for the first time in quite some time. The new products look REALLY GOOD. The star is the Portfolio, of which there are probably a hundred on display... which is a few hundred less than there are people to ooo over them.

On to bigger things. The STE is here... in a very standard 1040ST case. Running is a game that makes very good use of the digital stereo sound and somewhat less dramatic showing of the enhanced color palette. An XE Game System Light Gun (the only vestige of anything even vaguely 8-bit at the Atari booth) is attached via one of the two new controller ports. Can there be anyone who thinks that this is not Atari's "Amiga response"? It looks to me to be clear that the 1040-style machine is now considered the game-end of the ST line... although officials tempt the imagination by mentions that "more new machines at both ends of the lineup are yet to be announced." But not now, not here.

And the TT! Yes, there are at least five on display, running, and apparently several more for backup of versatility in setting up the displays. Looking a bit pale in almost-white, the TT 68030 machines literally roar through ST software.

Several demos were whipped up for the TT's introduction here, and the colors and speed are outstanding. One features what could be a spectrum picture, but even more photographic than any I have seen... even on an Amiga. Floating around in "front" of the picture is a magnifying glass that realistically enlarges the area beneath it... revealing even better detail. The new monitors feature extra resolutions - even monochrome in your choice of colors! ST programs run fine for the most part, but some dialogs are so fast that you can hardly see them! REZRENDER literally does in seconds on the TT what the ST takes HOURS to compute! And PageStream gives a new meaning to PAGESCREAM when flying low on the TT. Developers were invited to try their wares on the demo machines, and grins were the order of the day. It is rumored that a 24 mHz or faster TT may later be available to replace or supplement the 16 mHz ones on display now.

ABC Computers grace several boothettes. These are mostly 286 AT-clones, that offer a very nice mix of features and affordability... if you are into IBM clones. One was running Microsoft EXCEL, and for a moment I thought that it was ported to the ST line... wrong. Just showing speed and graphics on the popular MS-DOS platform.

Yes, several Megafiles (removable media hard drives). No, no CD-ROMs, although they figure prominently in announced dealer/developer support plans. Nope, no LYNX portable game machine (but after all, this is a COMPUTE show, not an entertainment electronics show). And yes, the STACY laptop ST is here... in force!

Stacy's display is one of cleanest and most stable I have seen on backlit LCD screens to date. I could easily work at it all day. Many of the display units are Stacy 4's, with 4 meg RAM and 40 meg internal hard drive. At the front left corner of the Atari booth is Dave Small and his Spectre GCR... the OTHER star of the Atari area. Yes, for the cost of the "real" Mac Laptop unit, you can have THREE Stacy's, each paired with a GCR emulator... and each Stacy will outperform the "real" one. And yes, dealers and distributors took careful notes.

Also featured up front was Michtron's PC SPEED, the IBM emulator that beat Avant-Garde to the US market. It was impressively compatible and four times faster than an IBM XT.

Over twenty booths were housed in the Atari display with many products for the Atari line. Check out ST*Zmagazine on-line for complete details. In all, Atari has shown enough of a new face here at COMDEX to give real reason to believe that they really could pull it off and become a respected and successful domestic computer company... next year. ●

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Announcing

Turn Your Atari into a Macintosh™

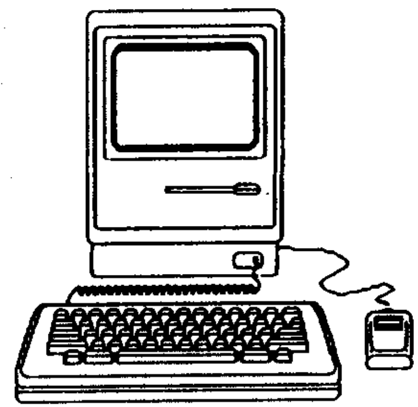
Spectre GCR

The Newest, Most Powerful Macintosh Emulator Available for Atari Computers

COMPATIBILITY :

- Reads and Writes Macintosh format disks with an Atari Disk Drive
- Runs the newest Mac software like HyperCard™, which need 128K Roms
- Uses Spectre Format or Macintosh Format Disks
- Hard Disk Compatible

Developed by David Small, the creator of the Spectre 128™



SPEED :

- GCR allows you to "plug and play" with Macintosh Disks in real time; no need to copy Mac Disks to Spectre Format
- The screen is 30% larger, and the overall speed of the Spectre is 20% faster than the Mac Plus

Suggested Retail : $ 299.95

Gadgets by Small, Inc.

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Z*Net Newswire...

ATARI News

⇨ Sega of America announced in November that Michael V. Katz has been named president of the company's Consumer division. Katz, who had been president of the Atari Entertainment Electronics division since 1987, assumed his responsibilities at Sega immediately. Prior to joining Atari, Katz served as president, chief executive officer and director of Epyx Inc., a leading computer game software developer. Katz' experience also includes serving as vice president of marketing for Coleco Industries from 1979 to 1983 and as marketing director for new products at Mattel from 1975 to 1979.

⇨ Fretter, Inc., a midwest appliance and electronics retail chain, had been involved in negotiations with Atari Corporation over the sale of Federated. Federated is a consumer electronic retail store chained owned and operated by Atari Corp. It was announced in November that Fretter could not reach an agreement and terminated the negotiations, despite early reports in major newspapers that the deal was complete.

⇨ Over 40 Atari developers attending the WAACE show in October gathered to discuss the formation of a developers association. The "Atari Association of Developers" has a temporary board of directors including Gordon Monnier of Michtron, Nathan Potechin of ISD Corp., Rich Flashman of Gribnif Software, John Eidsvoog of Codehead Software, George Morrison of Alpha Systems, and James Allen of Fast Technology. The board will develop a constitution and goals for the AAD. They seek to strengthen the developer support structure already provided by Atari Corporation. "Developer Helping Developer" is their motto. Developers will be eligible to join, based on their commercial product work. Communication will be via a private developer area on GEnie Telecommunication service, and no press information will be available until and unless the board releases it. The AAD may be a major step in inter-developer communication and technical support within the Atari community.

⇨ Atari Corp made a surprise hit of their computer lineup at the McDonnell Douglas/St. Louis Computer Fair on November 4. This is the first major multi-computer consumer show in memory that Atari has attended in force. Several thousand people attended to see every conceivable computer type from Timex to Altair to NEXT. Atari's large display is said to have drawn up to four times the crowds as the other booths. Items on display included: Stacy (with 4 meg and a 40 meg hard drive), Spectre GCR (wowing MAC enthusiasts and Atarians alike), Megafile 44, Moniterm Monitor, Atari Laser Printer, Turbo 16 Accelerator, PC-SPEED, Mega 4 (running Calamus), and various MIDI demos. Bob Brodie, Atari's popular User group Coordinator, and Jeff Williams, GEnie telecommunications Atari ST system operator, attended and made the event even more of a treat. The show was sponsored by the McDonnell Douglas Recreational Computing Club, and the success there might impress Atari officials to make more such efforts to bring the power of Atari into the line-of-sight of the real world computer enthusiast.

⇨ Recent statements made by Sam Tramiel, Atari CEO, at the fall Software Publishers Association meeting indicate that the 520ST (and maybe the 1040?) will be "blown out" as advanced game machines at prices intended to make them the "new C64". This recalls the success that the Tramiels had in making the Commodore 8-bit computer a part of so many households (even though many might have quickly been retired to closets).

⇨ ANALOG magazine has called it quits - altogether! ST-LOG and ANALOG merged in November, as did START and ANTIC. However, Larry Flynt Publishing decided that the new ANALOG wasn't going to make it, and pulled the plug as of the December 1989 issue. NO MORE ANALOG OR ST LOG!

⇨ Meanwhile, ANTIC (with START rolled in) will be coping with the loss of ANDREW REESE, the longtime head of the magazine. He resigned in November to take an attractive position with AUTOCADD Corp. Charles Cherry, former manager of the ANTIC SOFTWARE CATALOG, is now working at Atari Corp. It is said that HEIDI BRUMBAUGH (who was in charge of the disk operation) also left ANTIC.

⇨ ST-XPRESS, another ST specific magazine that has been popular in many parts of the country, is also closed. Partners in the company forced a dissolution in November, leaving principle Rich Decowski holding debts and obligation that he never transferred into the partnership. Some of the persons who made ST-Xpress popular are working to debut a new ST magazine with a serious applications focus, probably in the first quarter of 1990.

⇨ More closings: QMI and CMI!?! QMI has been closed for months, and CMI (makers of what seemed a good accelerator board for the ST) has dropped from sight and disconnected their phone.

⇨ CONGRATULATIONS: Charles F Johnson, one-half of the CODEHEAD software team (with John Eidsvoog), has a new partner. Charles flew to Hawaii to be married this October. Codehead is responsible for some of the best utility and productivity accessories available anywhere. Many of Charles' products are shareware and public domain.

⇨ The Lynx is advertised in the SEARS catalogs, hoping to make it for Christmas. Atari promised a November 18 delivery to Sears, who has been providing buyers with a back-order notice until this writing. Parts shortages (notably the color screens) may make availability far below demand.

⇨ Quickview Systems has filed a suit against Apple Computer for patent infringement. Quickview has alleged that HyperCard, which has been bundled with every Macintosh computer since August 1987, infringes U.S. Patent No. 4,486,857. The technology at issue is also used in Zoomracks, which was introduced by Quickview in 1985 on the Atari ST, two years before HyperCard. In January 1989, Zoomracks was chosen Best Database for its "influential interface ahead of its time" by Compute! magazine.

⇨ Despite a press release in August, the distribution contract for the 8-bit OASIS BBS system between MAX Systems and Z Innovators is null and void. Z Innovators requires a support fee of $25.00 for access to Oasis 4.6 files and SysOp help on XBN BBS. If necessary, send a copy of your cancelled check to MAX Systems, or a copy of your money order receipt, (no stubs will be accepted), and you will be given. Call XBN BBS at

Continued on next page ⊐

(617)-380-7886. Z Innovators, 1344 Park St. Dept. 187 Stoughton, MA 02072

➪ Shipping: Gadgets' GCR (plug and play MAC emulation for the ST and MEGA). However, many Mega users are finding that they can't just plug and play... their internal disk drives are too electrically noisey. The fix is easy but requires Mega-dissection and addition of aluminum foil shielding. Similar problems are reported on some outboard third party drives (notably the INDUS), but none are reported as yet from 520 or 1040 ST users, nor from the several prototype STACY units. GCR, $299, Gadgets by Small, (303) 791-6098.

➪ Dave Small and Jim Allen Jr. (of Fast Technology, maker of the Turbo 16 accelerators) held a conference on Genie in November to poll the opinions of the users on a new project they are working on. They hope to create an affordable 68030 processor upgrade for existing ST and Mega computers. The project should result primarily in a 4-8 fold increase in all ST functions! Other potentials include a new video output that may be compatible with the new resolutions of the Atari TT line. Timetable? Unknown, but sometime next year. Price? the closest they would come to saying was that they intended to keep the price "as far below $1,000 as possible".

➪ AVANT-GARDE of Florida has yet to begin distribution of PC DITTO II, the hardware IBM emulator. Although predicted for months ago, it seems that a long string of redesign and production problems are making it drag on. Bill Teal has avoided both phone and network communications for some time, which is creating discomfort for some customers who have sent their $150 already to upgrade from the software PC DITTO (regular retail: $299). The finished product is expected to be worth the wait, with a higher speed than originally promoted, co-processor support, and sophisticated interrupt handling.

➪ Meanwhile, MICHTRON's PC SPEED IBM board is gaining popularity, having been shown at several shows with success. PC SPEED is $399 and clocks a Norton index of 4, four times the speed of an IBM XT. Although some say it is not as competent as PCDITTO II will be, it is, after all, already commercially available.

➪ PAGESTREAM Version 1.8 is now available to owners of earlier versions, who can get their disks upgraded at any dealer who is authorized by Softlogik. Which means, for most of us, send your disk back to Softlogik! Beware, because there have been reports once again that the distribution copy of Pagestream 1.8 has that pervasive KEY VIRUS. Check your disks and kill 'em!!! The improvements in 1.8 are mostly in speed and bug reduction rather than in new features.

➪ Recent word from FTL, makers of the runaway game hit DUNGEON MASTER for the ST, says that despite what you will read on the box of CHAOS STRIKES BACK, the long awaited sequel, it does NOT require Dungeon Master to play it. A stand alone game, CSB has 13 new monsters, a character editor to allow customizing the look of your player, a non-sequential play allowing incremental mastery, a context sensitive help utility, and the ability to import characters built up by playing Dungeon Master. The new game is much meaner than the original, with even experienced players being challenged to stay alive more than a minute at a time!

➪ WORDFLAIR has been shown at a number of COMDEX shows in the last year... and was to be released as an Atari Corp title. However, developer BLUE CHIP bought back WordFlair rights from Atari and will sell it as a third party product. Atari is said to have wanted changes in the product that Blue Chip was unwilling to make, so they parted ways.

➪ Popular programmer Dorothy Brumleve and husband Tom have announced that they will be marketing their own line of software dedicated to kids and education. The first product will be KIDPUBLISHER PROFESSIONAL, a DTP system especially designed for "young writers". It is a total re-write of their Careware original program with far more features and improvements, complete with illustration and drawing power. Recommended for ages 5-11, it will be at dealers for $25, or send a check to D.A. BRUMLEVE - KIDPUBLISHER PROFESSIONAL, P.O. BOX 4195, URBANA, IL 61801-8820.

➪ Datel Computers is shipping the ST Clock Cartridge. The $49.95 cart plugs direct to the cart port on the ST and is software set and memory stable via batteries lasting over 5 years. Even with the cart disconnected from the ST, the batteries will keep the time and date. Datel Computers (800) 782-9110.

EUROPEAN NEWSWIRE:

(Please note that announcements and products mentioned MAY NOT be available in the USA... now or ever!)

➪ A "keyboard cart" is available overseas that plugs into the ST or Mega computer to allow any standard IBM compatible keyboard to plug directly into the cart! Everything works, including function keys! No distributor is yet known, but here's hoping it won't take long to see this item stateside.

➪ Last month the 1989 Personal Computer Show took place in London England. Here is a short review of the happenings:

ATARI was on hand showing the 68030 TT, STacy and 286PC.

MIRRORSOFT was demonstrating Fleet Street Publisher 3.

KODAK and ATARI showed off the Atari Transputer Workstation, (ATW). Kodak had the ATW connected to their new SV7400 still video player and a color output device.

HIGHSOFT showed off the STacy with the Spectre GCR from Gadgets By Small. Also on hand were other HIGHSOFT products such as Devpac, Highsoft C, Forth, FTL Modula 2, Highsoft Basic, Craft2 and Knife ST. Highsoft will be releasing new products in the future which are: ProFlight, the tornado simulator, and Lattice C version 5, a C compiler.

SILICA SYSTEMS showed Robokit which allows you to manipulate Robots and control your own robot arm designs. The product is plugged into the ST cartridge port, and provides 16 connections for for motors, sensors, and other various I/O applications.

CP SOFTWARE demoed Chess Player 2150 and Bridge Player 2150.

POWER COMPUTING was demonstrating the SUPER-A board for the ST. This is a nearly completed

Continued on next page ➪

internal hard disk, ROM board, and RAM upgrade board. The RAM upgrade can give you 3mb on the Mega 1 and up to 4mb on the Mega 2.

HYBRID ARTS was on hand showing seven new products. "CHAOS", a new operating system, (Custom Hybrid Arts Operating System), replaces GEM and gives quicker multi-program environment. GenEdit, a synthesizer/MIDI hardware editor. Protozoa, an editor for the new EMU Proteus. Edit Track and SMPTE which moves to version 2. FM Melody Maker, a cartridge based sound expander.

Industry News - And the Competiton:

➪ The Senate Judiciary Committee has been considering a bill that would restrict software rentals. In addition to the Senate Judiciary bill, an identical bill is pending before the House Judiciary Committee. According to Jane Saunders, general counsel for the Software Publishers Association, the bill will give software publishers "the right to restrict the rental or lending of their software for commercial purposes." She noted that the rental companies are "helping to facilitate software piracy," because their customers are "really paying a slight fee to borrow and copy" the programs.

➪ An Illinois consumer advocacy organization called (CUB) is in the midst of a legal battle over Illinois Bell Telephone's (IBT) plans to institute Local Measured Service (LMS) throughout Illinois. LMS caused the bills of some modem users to jump as much as 200 percent when it was implemented outside of Chicago, where telephone subscribers pay a single monthly charge for local calls. Under an LMS plan, even local calls are time-measured and charged as toll calls. Some computer users are concerned about LMS because of the experience of Chicago residents. When the ICC approved the service for metro Chicago a few years ago, substantially higher monthly bills were the result for modem users.

➪ Apple Computer is accepting proposals for a new grants program that challenges educators to develop computer-based interdisciplinary curriculums that encourage students to become more self-directed in their learning. The program called Crossroads, is aimed at economically disadvantaged students. More information can be obtained by writing to: Apple Education Grants, 20525 Mariani Avenue, MS:38J, Cupertino, California 95014. Deadline for applications is January 8, 1990.

➪ Commodore announced in November that their first quarter of 1989 ended with a net corporate loss of more than $6 million dollars. Loss of sales of the C64 and delayed promotions were given as the major causes for the loss. However, Amiga sales were up as well as those of the PC compatible series.

➪ Mediagenic, part of Activision, introduced Gametalk(TM), an object oriented game authoring system developed to enable efficient game design and the creation of advanced graphics applications. The first title to be released using Gametalk is Activision's "the Manhole" for IBM and compatible personal computers, which was first shown at the Summer CES. Mediagenic is a 1988 winner of the SPA Excellence in software Award for best new use of a Computer.

➪ Pepsi is bringing the Game Boy home for the holidays in an exclusive promotion with Nintendo. Pepsi announced October 24th that it will award more than 4,000 Game Boys to consumers before January 1, 1990. Consumers can win the Game Boy and other Nintendo accessories and free Pepsi products via an instant-win, under-the-cap giveaway on specially marked packages of Pepsi products. Additional prizes include Nintendo Action Sets, U-Force Remotes, Nintendo Game Paks, $5 Nintendo vouchers and free coupons for two-liter Pepsi products. ●

Call the Z*Net BBS 201-968-8148

Innovative Concepts

Imitator Controller

Happy 1050 owners can now go from the Fast or Slow modes, with the flick of a switch! Has another switch for write-protect, meaning 'no more disks to notch!' Also has a two-color LED for monitoring the write-protect status. Easy to install. NO soldering required! ***Only: $39.95***

IC1050 Controller

For ALL 1050 drives - Similar to our Imitator Controller, except without fast/slow switch. ***Only $29.95***

1989 Antic Award Winner

The Grahics Image Scanner for the Atari 8-bits! Now, Easy Scan II is even better! Supports graphics modes 8, 9, 10, 11, and 15. Saves images in the standard 62 sector format. Excellent for: User Groups, clubs, churches, and others! Use with: Banners, flyers, posters, and more! Requires - XL/XE/XE-GS with 128K (or more) and Epson graphics capable printer. ***Only: $99.95***

Print Shop Drivers

Now you use your 'incompatible' printer, with Print Shop and Print Shop Companion! Does NOT modify your original disks!
Only: $14.95 each, for your choice of the following printers: Atari 1020 Printer/Plotter (in 1 of 4 colors!), Okimate 10 (black only), Epson LQ-500/800 (24-pin compatibles)

Memory Upgrades

Memory Upgrades are NOW affordable again! All kits below INCLUDE RAMs and software! 128K & 192K upgrades are 100%-130XE Compatible. 256K and higher upgrades INCLUDE our Ramdrive Utility Package!

Computer	*Product Name*	*Description*	*Price*
600XL	Ramdrive + 64K	(16K to 64K)	$29.95
800XL	Ramdrive + XL to XE	(64K to 128K)	$49.95
800XL	Ramdrive + XL	(64K to 256K)	$79.95
65XE	Ramdrive + 128K	(64K to 128K)	$39.95
65XE	Ramdrive + 320K	(64K to 320K)	$79.95
130XE	Ramdrive + 192K	(128K to 192K)	$39.95
130XE	Ramdrive + XE	(128K to 320K)	$69.95
130XE	Ramdrive + 576K	(320K to 576K)	$69.95
XE-GS	Ramdrive + XE-GM1	(64K to 128K)	$49.95
XE-GS	Ramdrive + XE-GM2	(128K to 192K)	$39.95

XF35 Kit

Now, XF551 owners can convert their drive to the newer 3.5" format, and have a MASSIVE 720K of storage! Works with MYDOS, SpartaDOS, and the SpartaDOS X cartridge. Excellent for: BBS use, Hard Drive backup, or use as a 'mini hard drive!'. Includes Upgrade ROM, adapting cables and complete instructions. (3.5" drive and cage not included) ***SALE Price: $29.95***

Happy Doubler

Happy 1050 owners can now program their drives to be fully compatible with ICD's U.S. Doubler, including formatting disks in the U.S. skew! Also allows you to re-program the drive numbers up to D8:! Completetly software based, only 1 needed for as many Happy 1050s as you you may have! Also includes FREE Happy and Doubler type utilities! ***Only: $19.95***

SIO Port Box

Has 4 SIO ports to solve the weak signal problems, by allowing you to plug mutiple peripherals in one box. Also solves the 'dead end' peripherals, like the 410, XM301, and most printer interfaces. NO power required. ***Only: $39.95***

SIO Switch Box

Allows you to control 2 computers with one peripheral setup, OR, 1 computer with 2 peripheral setups! Has 3 SIO ports and a switch for: 2-in and 1-out OR 1-in and 2-out. Also solves the problem of using 2 devices that draw their power from the computer. (like the XM301 Modem, P:R Connection, and most printer interfaces). NO power required.. ***Only: $49.95***

ICX-85 Keypad

Finally, a numeric keypad for the 8-bits, that does NOT require the use of handlers! Works with ALL your software! Excellent for: programmers, spreadsheets, data base, and more! Deluxe version (for XL/XE/XE-GS) has the 1200XL Function Keys (F1-F4) also.
ICX-85 Kit (requires Hong Kong made CX-85) - ***$29.95***
CX-85 Keypad - ***$49.95***; Deluxe CX-85 Keypad - ***$69.95***

Modem Mouth

A small device that allows modems that do NOT have an internal speaker (like the 1030 and Avatex) to 'hear' what is going on! (busy signals, disconnects, recordings, etc.) Also works as a phone line monitor. Easy to use, just plugs in. ***Only: $29.95***

Xformer Cable

Now, along with the Xformer Software (available separately from Darek Mihocka), you can run many Atari 8-bit programs on your ST or Mega! Allows you to plug an 8-bit disk drive or printer into the ST or Mega! Also works for tranferring text and AMS music files as well. ***Only: $19.95***

Ordering Information

USA - Add $3.50 for S&H. COD is available for $3.00 extra. APO/FPO - Include $3.50 for S&H, in U.S. funds. Canada/Mexico Include $7.00 for S&H, in U.S. funds. Other Countries Include $10 for S&H, in U.S. funds.

Innovative Concepts (I.C.)

31172 Shawn Drive, Warren, MI 48093
Phone: (313) 293-0730
CompuServe EMAIL ID: 76004,1764
Dealer, Distributor, and User Group Inquiries welcome!
Now on GEnie too - address "I.C."
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TURBO 816 UPGRADE for the Atari 8-bit: A Closer Look

by Jeff McWilliams

From Dataque Software comes a new product known as the Turbo816x, a hardware upgrade which replaces the 6502 CPU within the Atari 8-bit computer, giving it new features and abilities. The Turbo816x is based on the 65816, a 6502 compatible 16 bit microprocessor featuring more powerful machine-level commands, an addressing range of 16 megabytes, and plug-in compatibility with the 6502 chip.

The package comes with a 5 1/2" x 3" daughterboard which plugs into the computer where the 6502 used to reside. It also includes a PROM chip which replaces the existing Operating System ROM chip in the computer. The manual contains instructions on how to install the Turbo-816x in a 600XL, 800XL, 1200XL, 130XE, or 65XE computer along with information on compatibility between Turbo816 upgraded machines and stock Atari computers. It also briefly mentions the new commands and addressing modes available to programmers. There is a text file on disk serving as an addendum to the manual which covers use of the Turbo Menu, a resident program within the Operating System allowing access to certain diagnostic and memory management functions.

On one end of the T816 board is the ribbon cable and connector which plugs into the 6502 socket, while the other end has a 50 pin connector known as the Turbo-BUS. This will be used to plug in possible future RAM cards, graphics cards, interfaces, etc. either directly or through the use of a cardcage which could plug into the bus and extend out the back of the computer. The OS PROM chip is simply a plug-in replacement for the one in the computer. The operating system code has been rewritten, optimized, and compacted in order to squeeze in additional functions for handling 16 bit operations and memory management. Again, compatibility has been retained as much as possible by keeping OS vectors in their original locations. Problems do arise however when programs make illegal calls to the OS or refuse to run under custom operating systems. The manual included with the upgrade has a list of programs that won't run properly under the Turbo OS. Problems such as these can be remedied by running the problem program under the original XL/XE OS.

The difficulty of installing the Turbo-816 depends upon whether or not the computer has socketed IC's. If the OS chip and 6502 microprocessor are soldered into the board, then having a certified technician do the installation is recommended, else the motherboard could be damaged. Socketed units can have a T816 installed in minutes by almost anyone.

Upon installing the Turbo816 into my 800XL, I discovered that the Turbo816 wouldn't work properly with ICD's MIO boards. I talked to Chuck Steinman of Dataque and he stated that he is currently working on the problem and will have the Turbo816 and the MIO working together very shortly.

The only added function immediately available to users of the Turbo816 is the Turbo Menu which can be entered by either holding [START] and pressing [RESET], typing BYE while in BASIC or MAC/65, or by running location $E471 from DOS or some other program. The menu has several functions including going to a 400/800 type notepad, going to a memory byte dumper, doing a coldstart of the system, running system diagnostic tests, running memory resident Turbo applications, erasing memory, and returning back to where the system was exited from.

The diagnostics sub-menu is vastly different from the Self-Test that came standard in the XL/XE machines. With this menu, tests can be run on the OS ROM, RAM, sound channels 1 through 4 (although the sound test appears buggy), the #1 Floppy Drive status, Line Printer Status, Keyboard, Joysticks and Paddles, the Console Keys, and the Real Time Clock.

The RAM test will test and map out all available RAM including the standard 64K of RAM, 130XE type banked or "Extended" RAM, and two 16 bit RAM types known as Expanded RAM and Explicit RAM. These two last RAM types would be RAM connected through the TURBO-BUS, and would be addressed in the addressing range beyond the first 64K. Dataque intends for Explicit RAM to utilize Static RAM technology while Expanded RAM consists of Dynamic RAM. The Turbo OS is capable of recognizing most RAM upgrades.

The byte dumper allows examination and alteration of any and all memory types in real time. Memory can be paged through in forward or reverse and in different sized leaps to make reaching distant memory locations quicker.

Another feature of the Turbo-OS is its ability to have up to eight Turbo Applications resident in memory. These applications may be called at any time either from the Turbo menu or from another program via a machine language call. The memory erasing menu allows any area of memory to be very quickly erased.

Dataque Software already has a programmer's kit available called the Turbo-P16 kit. This package is composed of 2 disks full of MAC/65 macros, OS equates, and programming examples for accessing the Turbo816's new capabilities. The P16 retails for $30.00.

Already being developed and almost ready for shipping by Dataque is the first Turbo application, Turbo Calc. This is reported as being an easy to use spreadsheet capable of running under almost any memory configuration and having surprisingly fast computational speed. Also soon to arrive will be the back plane containing up to eight card slots for IBM-like ease of installation of future hardware. Along with this comes the first of the RAM cards. These are STATIC RAM cards ranging from 32K to 256K with the ability to plug either directly into the Turbo BUS or into the back plane. The first cards available will have either zero or 64K and will cost $30 or $50 respectively.

The only serious problem I found with the Turbo816 is not really with product itself but rather with the lack of programming reference manuals dealing with the 65816 microprocessor. This has come as a surprise to me since the Apple IIGS also used this chip and it would seem logical that there would be a good number of programming manuals in circulation. Chuck Steinman of Dataque is searching for bookstores that may have 65816 programming manuals available and hopefully will come up with some shortly.

All in all, Dataque has provided a solid way of upgrading the Atari computer to 16 bit status. The board is generally simple to install, and all the documentation has been clearly written with the idea that not everyone is an expert with their Atari. By upgrading the Atari with the Turbo816, one can expect greater memory capacity, more programming power and faster executing applications via the new 65816 commands. This does not mean that existing programs will experience any significantly improved speed. Rather, future applications (like Turbo Calc) programmed specifically to take advantage of the 65816 will have this capability. Once Dataque solves the conflict the Turbo816 experiences with the MIO, it will become a welcome addition to my system, and I hope to have my hands on their upcoming products soon as well.

The Turbo816 retails for $120, and is available directly from Dataque, P.O. Box 134, Ontario, OH 44862. You must specify which Atari model you have when ordering. ●

RATTY'S RAP - Portfolio Update



by Matthew Ratcliff

I've actually gotten my hot little hands on a Portfolio. It is HALF the size of a video cassette tape when folded up. As for word processing, no real problem. The text editor allows you to configure margins to fit the screen, or scroll horizontally as you type on the "virtual display". Still, you don't see a LOT of information at one time.

The RAM cards for the Portfolio are battery backed up RAM diskettes. When removed from the computer, they remember everything. They're about the size of a credit card, and they even have a write protect switch - nice touch. The much more expensive Poquet uses a similar technology. Atari promises a little RAMdisk card drive for your desktop PC for about $95 to make exchanging files much simpler. I feel it's more important, however, to have an external, 3.5", battery operated disk drive for the Portfolio. Why? The Portfolio is very portable, for the professional ON THE GO. That means he or she may interface with many different computers throughout the day. The Portfolio needs a means of reading a standard media. Cable juggling with the file transfer software can be a real pain too. Zenith is now using these 3.5", 1/4 height, ultra slim drives in their laptops. Atari should look at something like this as an option for the Portfolio.

The Portfolio is a solid piece of workmanship. The box has this granite look to it, and the smooth, stone gray case has a sex appeal to it. It doesn't fit in a shirt pocket, but slides easily into the inside breast pocket of a suit coat. I know, I put it there ... but Bob Brodie made me take it back out - RATS! The Portfolio is very intuitive (from a PC geek's point of view). Atari ST users, who live and die by their graphical user interface, wouldn't agree. However, PC hackers accustomed to Messy DOS, will find that file management on the unit is very straight forward. Access to the built in functions is very simple. The spread sheet worked just fine. I'm not a Lotus user. I do my spread sheet work in Microsoft Works. However, I had no problems coming up with a little spread sheet, detailing the costs of the Portfolio. The sum total was a bit rich for my blood, however.

A fully pegged out Portfolio STILL costs more than a Toshiba T1100. That makes me hesitant, because I know how compatible the Toshiba is, how many interfaces it has, how COMPLETE it is. There are still a couple of unknowns about the Portfolio.

However, a very reliable source reports that the Portfolio runs quite a bit of software. The major caveat is that applications which write directly to screen RAM, for faster display updates, will not function on the Portfolio.

A developer's kit is available for the Portfolio. If I'm not mistaken, you get the Portfolio, Serial Interface, Parallel Interface, two 128K RAM cards, and technical documentation (especially on the screen's text and graphics capabilities, and hardware specifications on the 60 pin interface) for only $750. That is an excellent price.

My source tells me that the Portfolio file transfer software is a bit slow, but quite reliable. With the RS232 adapter, he has yet to find an existing terminal program that will work on the Portfolio, however. He transferred some Norton utilities and some of PC Magazines famous utilities, and they worked fine. The Portfolio, with only 128K of internal RAM, will require small programs.

The Portfolio has already attracted some friends I work with. One is interested in using it in industrial controls. The display need only be large enough to represent the labels this dedicated label printing machine will create. He feels the Portfolio might do the job, but he wants to write the program in Quick BASIC and compile it. I don't know if it would fit, probably. But would it run? None of Atari's ads for the Portfolio discuss the compatibility issue regarding the device. If you purchase it, without any interfaces, you've basically got a Sharp Wizard - a large pocket organizer. With the interfaces, you have hard copy and file transfer capabilities. The Sharp Wizard can do those things too - but at least the Portfolio has a useable keyboard.

I found it fairly comfortable to type on the Portfolio with 4 fingers. The keys were spaced widely enough that I didn't have a problem with striking multiple keys. Rather than slanting the whole keyboard, the keys are each tilted up at a slight angle. It's quite comfortable. They do have a genuine tactile feel, and the audible keyclick (which may be disabled) is nice - especially for Atarians who have become accustomed to that on their home machines. The built in speaker can also generate the tones necessary to dial your phone numbers. The calendar function looks pretty good, and even has alarm functions.

After getting my hands on a Portfolio for several hours, I'm quite impressed. It is well built, and quite functional. From the other contacts I've made, it is compatible enough to be very useful. The first order of the day, for any developer who should take an interest, is to write a version of Tetris for that small graphical display - really show up the Nintendo Game Boy!

My biggest complaint about the Portfolio now is that it doesn't have an external battery operated disk drive option. I consider it a must, and I think it will happen soon. The other problem this $400 wonder has is its warranty - it's only 90 days. If I spend $400 on a new Sony TV, I EXPECT a 1 year warranty. Virtually all desktop computers now have a 1 year warranty, many 2, with options for extending it. The Portfolio needs a longer warranty. Purchase it with the right credit card, from what I hear in some commercials, and the credit card company will double the warranty's life. In the case of the Portfolio, that might be a pretty wise move.

I can see a lot of potential for Portfolio, and many useful applications for it as it is delivered by Atari. It wouldn't be wise to get it without a computer interface. Should you get 100K worth of important customer information in the unit and then it forgets the works for some cosmic reason, you'll be real sad. Of course, backing up to the battery backed up RAMcards is another solution. I've never trusted battery backed RAM. I have it in my PC. It keeps all the setups for my system - and it's forgotten all the information about 4 or 5 times in the last two years. The Portfolio has a large enough capacitor to retain memory long enough for you to change batteries. Still, I wouldn't change them without a complete backup of all my data.

Do I still consider the Portfolio a toy? Nope. I can see too many practical applications for it right now, if I could somehow get it into my suit coat pocket. Note, at one pound, the Portfolio will make your suit coat sag to one side a bit...but if you get all your suits cut lopsided, no one will noticed ●

Ron Kovacs' 8-Bit Public Domain Report

*Programs mentioned here are available both on GEnie and CompuServe unless otherwise noted. Most may be freely transferred on any BBS, and will be found on the Z*NET BBS, 201-968-8148.*

TEXTPRO Version 4.0: This is the latest version of TextPro as of November '89. Fully compatible with SpartaDosX. It runs from high memory and uses all available memory for text and paste buffers, and more.

CHRISSIE.PIC: This picture available on GEnie is one of the first Vidi-ST pictures ported over to the 8-bit, this is a scan of Chrissie Hynde of the Pretenders converted to Microillustrator format. Compressed pic.

DRAGON.ARC: This is a character roller designed for use with DRAGONRAID, the Ethical gaming alternative, a Fantasy Role-Playing Game like D&D, with a Christian perspective. This roller creates and calculates characters for the game, including print-outs (an Epson type printer is recommended.) Docs included! Available on CompuServe.

ZREAD2.ARC: The latest reader program for ZMAGAZINE. Same type of program as ZREAD.BAS, but for the new ASCII and 80 column format. ZMAG should be on Disk as ZMAGxxx.TXT. This allows 8 bitters to read with no conversion necessary. This version is in compiled Turbo Basic.

BPGM41.ARC & BDOC41.ARC: Version 4.1 of the BOWLING ASSISTANT for ATARI XL & XE plus complete documentation. The program files (BPGM41.ARC) contain a full fledged data base for bowling leagues, featuring stat listings, sorted rankings in several categories, tracking of substitutes, awards, and much more! It requires an XL/XE. and 1050 (or compatible) disk drive, along with Turbo Basic, and MYDOS 4.5

LOTTOW.ARC: A series of Lottery Tracking programs in BASIC. Based on the Arizona Lottery (42 numbers in groups of 6), it can be easily adapted to your own needs. Shows patterns, ranks numbers based on frequency, and more. Docs included in the ARC file. ●



Alice Amore's ST SHAREWARE SURVEY

This month we are taking a new attitude about what we used to call "The PD Shelf" in order to draw more attention to the difference between PUBLIC DOMAIN and SHAREWARE. Shareware is a generic term for "try before you buy" software. You are encouraged to use Shareware long enough to evaluate it and to decide whether or not you will be using it on a regular basis. If you decide that you will, it is your duty to register the program with its author and send the requested registration fee to him/her. Shareware programs are commercial products!

Some programs are "donated" to the public and are in the public domain. That's fine, and we will continue to review them as well. But other programs are designated by the author as SHAREWARE and should be treated as such. There is no excuse to go on using a program, sometimes for years, without paying the author as requested.

Programs featured here are typically available on both GEnie and CompuServe, and on better BBS's everywhere. Look for them on the Z*NET BBS, 201-968-8148.

FILENAMR: Tom Hayslett's "File Namer" will let you change an existing filename to include any of the ST's 256 ASCII codes. Now you, too, can include the Atari fuji symbol in your filenames! ASCII codes and normal "keyboard" symbols can be easily combined. You'll like the results.

LQPRTIT: LQ Print It!, ver. 1.0, from Ray Roux, offers a quick way to print out graphic libraries from PrintMaster. Some features: A printed header containing the library name and the number of pictures it contains; Up to 56 pictures, with names, can be printed per page; Up to 50 libraries can be printed at once, with each library holding up to 200 pictures; Progress reports appear on the screen during printing. (Another good program of the same sort is Chet Walters' PM-CAT. Try both!)

ARTST230: Art-ST is one of the finest pieces of ST shareware around. It is an impressive drawing program which supports lines, boxes, circles, text, fine pixel editing, fills with user definable mono or multi-color patterns, copy and paste, and support of all available multiple picture buffers. Picture files from other drawing programs can be imported, and animation is supported. This upgrade includes many improvements. From Robert M. Birmingham of Axolotl Software.

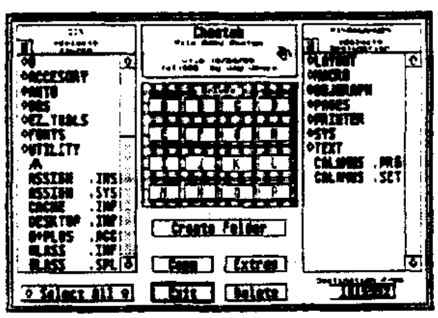
XRAMXXXX: Here's a RAMdisk which lets you specify the drive letter and the capacity right in the filename itself. Simply substitute the X's with drive letter (at the beginning) and drive size in Kbytes (at the end). Copy the file to your boot disk, install the drive from the desktop, and save your configuration. Written by James C. McCormick.

ASSASSIN: Atari GDOS Fonts are a lot of fun to play with, but everyone hates having to deal with the ASSIGN.SYS file that contains information telling your program which fonts you'll be using, where they're located, and more. Although the ASSIGN.SYS file can be created using any ASCII word processor, it's a dreary process and mistakes are easily made, and a different ASSIGN.SYS file is often necessary for each font-using program. ASSASSIN makes the task a breeze. Using a simple workspace, it prompts you to load the fonts you want to include, then saves the ASSIGN.SYS for you. You can quickly whip up an ASSIGN.SYS file for every program requiring one. ASSASSIN is shareware from Michael F. Ellis.

SDRIVER: This is a "stay-resident" program which will allow you to hook up an Atari 8-bit drive to your ST system. Access to the 8-bit drive will be just the same as with an ST drive. (Note that only single/ sided drives are supported in this version. Higher capacity drives will be supported in future versions.) In addition to the drive, you will need a special cable. You can use Darek Mihocka's "XformerII" cable, or you can register your program with the author and receive a suitable cable from him. The cable connects the 8-bit drive to your printer port. You can also daisy-chain additional drives. You can read, write, copy, delete, and the other usual STuff. Remember that you can NOT read and write 8-bit files with this set-up, nor can you perform whole-disk copies. But you can do as much file-massaging as you please. Be aware that the 8-bit drives are quite a lot slower than the ST drives. SDRIVER is shareware from James C. McCormick.

SNOWMAN: Get yourself this file for Christmas and share it with family, friends, and everyone else in the world! SNOWMAN is a delightful story told through superb animation and digitized sound. The original is an award-winning short subject. (Quite by accident, I saw a videotape of the original advertised on TV but I didn't write down the 800 number.) The SNOWMAN file was created in W. Germany (ST VISION International User Group) using ST REPLAY 4 and The Grabber. The file is large, indeedy, but well worth downloading. It will loop and play over and over again, so run it during your group meetings and in your stores during the holiday season. The only negative comment I can make about this file is that there's no way to exit from it gracefully. You must reboot. SNOWMAN requires 1 meg of memory and runs in low resolution only. If you must run it from a floppy, you'll need a double/sided disk.

CHEETAH: An extremely fast file-copying utility. Although designed primarily for hard drives, it works quite well on floppies. It boasts transfer rates of from 6 to 14 Mb/Min., averaging about 9 MB/Min. Selecting source and destination paths can be done by clicking or dragging, and "file masks" are available. An "Auto Select" routine will select as many files as will fit into the free space on the destination drive! An "Extras" menu lets you see the size of the buffer or free memory, change the file sort order, toggle a performance window after copying is completed, zero a drive, and more. Most of these ultra fast routines are accomplished through buffering. If you have the memory, you can copy up to 200 files with one command. The UNDO key can be used if you change your mind at any time. "Quick keys" are available for a variety of functions. If you do a great deal of file-copying, CHEETAH will be of special interest to you.



DIARY-14: This program is a joy to use, rough edges and all. It's something just about anyone can use. A word processor-like text editor holding up to 8K in memory at all times, DIARY stays resident in your ST as a desk accessory (an .ACC file). Simply pull down the "DESK" icon, and click on DIARY 1.4. A half-window will appear. Touch the MENU listing in the upper left-hand corner, or hit the HELP key. This will give you a list of all of DIARY's features. This latest version supports block printing, string searches, cut and paste, the UNDO key, faster scrolling, word wrap, and a full-size window toggle. I just love this program. I use it to take notes on the programs I review, and I'm even using it now as a "note pad" while within Word Writer. (And I used to rely on my PC laptop for such STuff!) ●

The Archive Bit

Compiled by Ron Kovacs from The ZMagazine Archives

December 1986, (three years ago this month):

• BATTERIES INCLUDED, makers of the PAPERCLIP word processor and many other titles, has abandoned copy protection of any kind. Marty Herzog says his company, known for using a joystick port "key" for copy protecting software, will simply drop the Atari line if piracy gets out of hand.

• COMMODORE people are irked by ATARI ads running in their Commodore magazines...the same ads that ran in the ATARI specific mags this fall. Well, maybe they'll do some good in the Commodore mag - WE didn't need to see them.

• Over the previous 3 years, 3 out of every 5 dollars earned by ATARI was earned overseas. Sales of video games ROSE to 27% of total net sales during 1986.

• The Tramiel family will retain control over ATARI CORP. after their public stock sale. Jack will personally own over 45%.

• Every director or executive officer of ATARI CORP. (except for 1 person) is either an ex-COMMODORE employee or a member of the Tramiel family.

• Sam Tramiel, President of ATARI CORP., stated "consumer acceptance and retail takeaway continues extremely strong. Demand for the Atari video games and the 16/32 bit ST computers exceeded our expectations." He also said, regarding the successful initial public offering completed during November 1986, "ATARI CORP. is now aggressively pursuing its leadership role in the personal computer industry from a position of strength, that is, we are virtually debt-free and have a solid equity base on which to build the company's future."

• An IBM-emulator for the ST from Paradox Enterprises is supposed to start shipping. Retailing for about $70, this product is to offer a good percentage of compatibility with IBM software. Being software based, it runs at least 30% slower than native IBM mode. For those drooling over the prospect of running IBM software, this emulator may satisfy you long enough until the release of ATARI'S announced BBB (BIG BLUE BOX).

December 1987:

• Atari Stock hits bottom at $4.875 a share after the "Black Monday" market crash.

• Whitehouse Computer, a big advertiser and low price mail order house, goes bankrupt owing $200,000.00, and lots of undelivered products.

• Alan Reeve announces that he intends to write DIAMOND, a graphic system for the 8-bit Atari that will look and feel like an ST.

• MEGA Series ST machines make it to market and dealers begin selling it, SX-212 modems, and the XEGS game system.

• Network Research Corp, Tigera Corp, and others announce major new support of the Atari ST. Their products will run under IDRIS, a Unix-like operating system offered by Whitesmith Corp, and promise major business applications and networking.

• Word Perfect 4.1 is released for the Atari ST. As one of the highest price ST titles ever at $295, sales are slow, but WP offers a $99 special for students and educators.

December 1988 (one year ago):

• Both DIAMOND and GOE desktop environments for the 8-bit Atari are stalled in development due to the new SPARTADOS-X cart behaving differently, but both are "almost ready".

• DataQue's development of the Turbo 816 board for the 8-bit is blocked by failure of negotiations with Atari Corp. Designer Chuck Steinman reports that he must use parts or at least references to the Atari stock operating system, and can't/won't until Atari says it's ok.

• Soft-Logik ships version 1.5 of PAGESTREAM, their new desktop publishing package, to replace the bug-ridden version 1. The new version is claimed to be "bug free" and "solid as a rock."

• MIGRAPH begins to ship TOUCH-UP, a major applicat tion for creating and editing raster-graphics (.IMG files). At $200 and featuring a print-port "dongle" anti-pirate device, the initial reaction is slower than expected.

• ATARI Corp schedules a developer conference to be held in Sunnyvale, only to cancel it later saying "there was nothi ing new to discuss."

• Darek Mihocka announces and begins to sell software and a cable that will allow Atari 8-bit disk drives (and other peripherals) to work on the ST while running his ST-XFORMER 8-bit emulator.

• Atari declares 1989 to be "The year of Atari", and promises a dramatic USA push of products and advertising that will, by year end, make Atari a household word. ●

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